

Summarised Inspection Findings

Boddam Primary School

Aberdeenshire Council

SEED No: 5215625

18 April 2017



Section one

Summarised Inspection Findings

Boddam Primary School

1.3 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community*
 - *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
 - *Implementing improvement and change*
- The school has had three headteachers over the last four years. This has led to an unsettling time for staff and learners. The new headteacher has been in the substantive post for two months having already been in an acting position since August 2016. In her short time in post she has already moved quickly to build successful relationships built on mutual trust with all stakeholders. She is already respected by learners, parents and children.
 - The new headteacher has begun a drive to promote improvement in every area of the school's work. It is too early to show measurable impact at this stage, however the conditions are now in place to develop further a collaborative culture where staff are keen to work together taking forward a shared vision for school improvement. This session, in partnership with the Parent Council and learners, the school developed a new, ambitious shared vision and values to empower learners to achieve quality outcomes in a respectful learning environment. The staff recognise they now need to develop this vision further, engaging all children, parents, carers and partners and using *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. Almost all parents in the pre- inspection questionnaire say they are satisfied with the school
 - Staff understand the importance of strong collegiate planning and are now participating in well led weekly meetings to take forward improvements in learning and teaching. They work together well using their non-class contact time regularly to overtake improvement planning actions and share learning from peer observations. They meet with pupil voice groups regularly to ensure learners ideas are heard and acted upon. The headteacher understands the need to offer parents a more formal role in improvement planning and this is planned for next session.
 - The headteacher works with staff on a range of self-evaluation activities using HGIOS4 indicators. Staff are developing their skills as reflective practitioners and are starting to use self-evaluation processes to effect the pace of change. Challenge questions are used well in headteacher and peer observations. The headteacher understands that there now needs to be a much stronger strategic focus on leading improvement and change across all aspects of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The school improvement plan needs to be focussed more on clear actions to ensure ongoing improvement in these three key areas.
 - School planning needs to more robust across all areas of learning, using experiences and outcomes, and from there using the benchmarks to support assessment. The headteacher and staff now have to identify accurately the key aspects for

development and move to overtake these using tight timelines. Further work now needs to be done to ensure that all future professional dialogue is focussed on these most pertinent areas of improvement.

- Staff are developing their professional standards through a clear ongoing commitment to General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) policy and implementation. All staff set clear objectives linked to the GTCS standards. There is a clear online professional review and development process set out by the Aberdeenshire Council which is used well by all staff.
- Staff know the social, economic and cultural context of their learners well. All staff understand they now need to build further on this knowledge to provide the few learners facing barriers to achievement with further support to ensure they receive an equitable learning provision. This should include moving to develop further school community partnership work within the local Peterhead area and beyond to provide wider opportunities linking learning to local contexts.
- Staff take lead roles linked to the school improvement plan. A few staff use their own professional learning and involvement in further qualifications to inform their contribution to evaluating the work of the school. Time for study or professional learning is limited currently due to ongoing staffing issues. The local authority is aware of this challenge.
- Equity and social justice is promoted through the teachers knowing children well, and engaging strongly with parents in an informal basis. The school has a very open door policy and parents can also speak to the class teacher or headteacher at any time. Homework to enhance classroom learning, is supported well through the school homework club. Senior leaders promote and support creativity and innovation through, for example the use of behaviour monitoring software, the use of a variety of learning apps and through the use of well used digital whiteboards in most classrooms.
- The school is developing a culture for parents to support and lead the work of the school further. The development of the parent council is supporting the purchase of resources to enhance learning, feeding back to the parents forum about school events and helping to raise the profile of the school. Parents and friends of the school contribute to developing children's understanding of the world of work. This includes parents and friends delivering sessions on career choices.
- The headteacher is leading staff development to implement the new monitoring systems to track learning better across the school. There now needs to be a clear focus on ensuring that the data and other information gathered from regular observations is analysed rigorously and used to show the impact and quality of improvement.
- Children lead school improvement and self-evaluation through the use of regular pupil voice focus groups. During the inspection week children spoke well about how they would like to see their learning progress at a faster pace. They could explain clearly what improvements they felt would take the school forward. For the school to improve at pace the headteacher needs now to place a clear focus on enhancing leadership skills for all children, staff and parents especially in the area of learning and teaching.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

weak

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
 - *Quality of teaching*
 - *Effective use of assessment*
 - *Planning, tracking and monitoring*
- There is a strong focus on developing positive relationships across the school and in classes. Whilst the children were not always motivated by the tasks, almost all children engage well in learning opportunities. Too few children have an understanding of the purpose of learning and this is not made explicit in lessons. Expectations for learners are not consistently high. Staff should ensure that tasks and activities are differentiated effectively across all stages in order to support appropriate progression. The language of learning needs to be much better embedded across all classes.
 - While there are opportunities for pupils to engage in events that involve them in the life of the school and the wider community, there is scope for these to be more carefully planned to link to their learning and skills progression.
 - Across classes, children have the opportunity to identify targets in their learning and these are shared through the use of digital software. Setting of targets is not yet systematic or directly linked to current learning in classes. Children do not have a clear understanding of how they can build on prior learning. Feedback to children should focus clearly on future learning.
 - Staff should ensure that they are maximising the opportunities for planned learning and teaching across the week. Plans should be made to ensure that “Dojo Time” and McCrone cover is reviewed in order to ensure all pupils are engaged in relevant, meaningful learning linked to clear Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes during these time allocations.
 - Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is inconsistent and variable. Approaches do not allow the children to be involved actively in their own learning and are often too teacher led. Children need many more opportunities to lead and take responsibility for their own learning. The school needs to review their approaches to effective learning and teaching to ensure all children are motivated fully and challenged appropriately. The school is beginning to increase its use of digital notepads to broaden learning tasks. There is scope for these to be used more effectively to enhance learning opportunities further.
 - In almost all classes, the use of questioning was limited in its purpose and effectiveness. The school has identified the need to develop the use of higher order thinking skills and quality questioning. Feedback does not identify next steps in learning or allow children to identify what they need to do to improve. Targets set within the class and through the software used, do not focus on prior learning to

ensure progression. The school should continue to develop strategies to help inform and support progress in learning. This should include a focus on children setting their own targets and next steps in order to increase their responsibility for their learning.

- In almost all classes, learning intentions are shared with learners though learners do not yet have a clear understanding of the purpose of these intentions and how this links to the task they are completing. In less than half the classes, success criteria were shared with pupils and this often focused solely on completion of the task. Children would benefit from learning intentions being more focused in order to develop their understanding of the purpose of learning.
- A variety of formative assessment strategies are being used across classes such as sharing of learning intentions, thumbs up and fist of five. These are not yet being used consistently or effectively across classes. Formative assessment strategies do not yet focus on what the learners need to do in order to improve. Across a few classes pupils have been involved in self and peer assessment although this is not yet being used consistently. The school should continue to develop a clear shared understanding of effective formative assessment and how this can impact on effective learning and teaching.
- Staff recognise the benefits of engaging in moderation within the school and across the cluster although this has not yet started. They recognise the need to develop approaches to moderation in order to support shared expectations of standards to be achieved. This will enable the school to plan relevant and appropriately challenging learning for all children.
- The school currently carry out a range of baseline and standardised assessment with all pupils. Staff are currently trying to use these to help inform planning and tracking. They do not yet have a clear understanding of progression within and across curriculum levels. The school needs to develop their approaches to planning for progression to ensure children are being appropriately challenged in their learning.
- Staff are not yet using the experiences and outcomes across all curriculum areas to plan for effective learning. Relevant contexts for learning are not being developed to ensure children apply their learning, and develop appropriate skills. Staff are beginning to explore how cross curricular learning and IDL can be planned. Staff are exploring 'bundling' of Experiences and Outcomes but this should be reviewed in order to ensure appropriate progression within and across levels.
- Whilst a new tracking system for all areas of the curriculum has been developed, information within this is not accurate or based on sound professional judgement. The school should focus on developing a shared understanding of progression within the curriculum and how this can be planned for and assessed effectively with an initial focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.
- The school has developed IEPs for children who require additional support, involving parents and children in the process. The school should ensure the targets within these documents are regularly reviewed and evaluated to inform next steps. A range of standardised assessments are carried out with children. These do not yet help inform planned interventions well enough in order to raise attainment for all children including those with additional needs.

2.2 CURRICULUM: theme 2: Learning Pathways

- **See the school's QI of choice below which is 2.2 Curriculum.**

2.7 PARTNERSHIPS: theme 3 Impact on learners – Parental Engagement

- The school has strived to develop positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents told us that they feel more involved in the wider life of the school. The school recognises the need to develop the effective involvement of parents to support their individual child's learning and progress further. The school gathers feedback from parents on a range of topics linked to the life and work of the school. They should now ensure this feedback is analysed and used effectively to inform improvements.
- The school has engaged with the Parent Council to share school improvement and how this impacts on classroom practice. Staff should now develop approaches to engage the wider school community in the work of the school and how they can also support all children in their learning. The school is starting to consult with parents on school developments, for example, the review of homework policy.
- The Parent Council play an active role in fund raising which is helping to enrich opportunities for all pupils. The school recognise that they could develop further partnership working with parents and the local community in order to enhance the curriculum and to take forward the 'Developing the Young Workforce' agenda.

2.1: SAFEGUARDING

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. A few areas for development were agreed with the school and the education authority. The headteacher moved immediately and has now overtaken the one development required.

3.1 ENSURING WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
 - *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
 - *Inclusion and equality*
- Staff are developing very positive relationships with all the children in their care. Pre-inspection questionnaire responses indicate that almost all children report that staff treat them with care and respect. The school has a helpful code of conduct to encourage positive behaviour and stakeholders indicate that this is leading to better relationships across the school. Children demonstrate a strong sense of care for others and recognise the positive impact of a kind word or compliment. Children are nurtured well by staff and other practitioners. Relationships across the school community are positive founded on a climate of respect and children are considerate of others around them both inside the school building and in the outside areas. During the week of the inspection behaviour was very positive in almost all classes.
 - A focus on the language of feelings is helping children to monitor their own emotions and behaviour and to recognise how their actions can impact negatively on the feelings of others. Staff understand they need to develop the use of the wellbeing indicators further. A few classes have begun using the wellbeing wheel within learners experiences. This should be done consistently across the school. Almost all children learn in mainstream classes with a few children supported well by personal support assistants (PSAs) in smaller support groups.
 - The school improvement plan for session 2016-17 identifies a range of priorities for the development of health and wellbeing. Staff have focused on a broader coverage of the Es and Os in health and wellbeing. At the moment classes have been focussed on vision values and aims, celebrating diversity and discussions about feelings. The headteacher understands that the school now needs to develop programmes already in place further to account for better progression in learning.
 - The school is at the early stages of using the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators as a tool to identify and support the needs of individual children. The headteacher has identified the need to now move on to use the indicators in a more consistent, holistic, integrated way within the school with all staff and all children. Staff should continue with plans to engage with parents more to develop a shared understanding of wellbeing. This will help to meet the needs of all children and their families fully and will allow children to self-assess their own wellbeing better identifying what they need to do to achieve improved health and wellbeing outcomes. Children in a few classes are able to talk about their rights and responsibilities within the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC). The headteacher understands the need to roll out this work across all classes. During the inspection almost all children reported that they feel safe in school. Staff plan to use a new survey to ensure that every child can confirm they feel safe in school.

- Through work on health and wellbeing, children understand the benefits of developing and having a healthy life, where they are active. The school recognises the need to make better use of existing opportunities to extend learning and skill development in HWB in real and meaningful situations. For example, to take a self-evaluative approach to improving the connections between classroom learning about food and health and the food choices made at break and lunchtime. The school promotes the use of exercise to ensure a healthy body
- The headteacher works closely with stakeholders who provide helpful data and information on health, relating to the local community. This information should inform the strategic direction of the schools' approach health and wellbeing alongside the school values, GIRFEC and the UNCRC. The school has responded positively to the recent opportunity to work with Active Schools and Peterhead Football club in response to data from Active Schools indicating a reduced after school activity provision. A strong sense of wellbeing is evident amongst those children who choose to attend the weekly lunchtime Scripture Union group.
- Children understand they have someone to talk to whenever there are situations affecting their everyday lives. The Personal Support Assistants (PSAs) play a strong role in the playground and in the classroom supporting the wellbeing of children with additional needs well. The school has helpful links and relationships with a range of agencies supporting children who are experiencing barriers to learning. The headteacher is involved actively in engaging the expertise and resources of partner agencies.
- The school uses a range of approaches to monitor children's wellbeing. All staff use an 'emotional thermometer' in the classroom. Teachers incorporate time to speak to children where negative change is shown. The school is at the very early stages of exploring how nurturing and restorative processes can help staff further to secure improvements in children's wellbeing. Children cannot yet talk with confidence and clarity about their progress in health and wellbeing. We have agreed with the school that it needs to monitor its work around health and wellbeing more, in order to show how effectively they are improving outcomes for children and their families.
- Children's entitlement to two hours of quality physical education is not yet being met and staff should complete a review of this provision to ensure that all children benefit from quality learning which delivers progression in skills. To date they are receiving at least one hour of PE using the Es and Os and with the development of limited skills not always appropriate to the level.
- The headteacher delivers aspects of inclusion and equalities at assemblies on a weekly basis. There is scope to develop the curriculum further to provide children with progressive learning experiences relating to inclusion and equalities including themes such as disability, race, gender, racism and religious intolerance.
- Children participate in regular opportunities for religious observance led by their local ministers who provide fortnightly religious school assemblies that enable children to explore faith and diversity. The curriculum is planned well to include opportunities to explore diversity and faith.
- The school has proactive systems in place to ensure that all learners are included and involved in the life of the school. This includes the use of a house system which enables all learners to feel part of a team and the chance to work across stages. Staff and

learners value diversity and celebrate this through sharing work at assemblies. Through work on growth mindset children are understanding that everyone has different skills and that these are at differing stages of development. The school should take account of equalities in all aspects of school life for example challenging the use of gender stereotypes in play.

- Discrimination is challenged through ongoing class discussions and through following the Aberdeenshire policies.
- Learners understand there are no barriers to learning and achievement. The school takes account of the cost to families of school events and activities effectively by issuing grant applications to all families. The staff monitor and support a few children with additional challenges in learning through targeted support such as a daily learning programme, one to one support with their teacher or additional time to discuss targets. The school works well with a range of partners to provide children with opportunities to take part in activities out of school. The school offers an effective social skills group where selected children lunch together with a member of staff to learn the social and other life skills.
- There are well crafted support plans for individual children. There is still more work to be done to ensure plans have fully child friendly language and that children are truly connected to them.
- Children facing barriers to learning receive appropriate support from a range of partner agencies.

3.2 RAISING ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

weak

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners*

Attainment Overall:

- Overall children's attainment in English language and literacy and mathematics and numeracy is weak.
- A majority of the children achieve early level in mathematics and numeracy by the end of P1, less than half the children achieve first level at P4 and less than half in P7 achieve second level in mathematics and numeracy. In listening and talking most children achieve the level by the end of the early level. A majority of children are achieving the level by the end of P4 and P7.
- In reading, a majority of children across the school achieved early level by the end of P1, a majority reached first level in reading by P4 and a majority reached second level in reading by P7.
- In writing the majority of children achieve early level by the end of P1. Less than half of the children reached first level in writing by the end of P4 and in P7 only a few achieved second level in writing.
- There is limited accurate information of attainment levels now and before 2015-2016. The headteacher is aware of the lack of an improving trend in literacy and numeracy. All staff now need to focus further on more rigorous assessment and moderation of children's progress in literacy and numeracy to ensure that children have the maximum opportunity to develop their skills in these important areas and improve their attainment year on year.

Overall progress in Literacy:

Overall children's progress in literacy is weak.

Listening and Talking:

- Children are developing and applying skills in listening and talking informally across their learning. Across the school children interact well with others through cooperative group work. Children in a focus group demonstrated their ability to listen very well to each other in a respectful manner. Most children in P1 can respond to instructions related to their learning, demonstrating their understanding. By P4, most children are demonstrating that they can respond to different types of questions in the classroom, a majority can identify key ideas within spoken texts through the use of their work with Blooms taxonomy. In P7, a majority of children are asking and responding well to evaluative questions and considering the detail behind key ideas. Children can present well and answer questions linked to a presentation with clear volume and good eye contact. They should be given more opportunities to develop

their debating skills. To date listening and talking is only tracked informally. Clear success criteria at the level should be agreed with children and formal opportunities for assessment should be developed alongside the informal assessment already taking place.

Reading:

- Children are engaging well with a range of texts across learning and are selecting texts for their personal reading supported through the well-stocked school library. All P1 children are being introduced to sounds and blends using a range of approaches. Those children who are showing confidence with initial sounds and blends should now be challenged with faster paced learning activities. As they progress in their learning children read with increased fluency and expression. This could be much more consistent across the school. Children are able to answer a range of questions about texts, including inferential questions, in the upper stages. The majority of children at P4/5 are using texts to find key information within different contexts and using different strategies. The majority of P7 children are able to select relevant information from a range of sources. Children in P7 at second level can analyse a range of texts using critical thinking skills. The school now needs to put in place a clear strategy to improve standards in reading consistently across the school. Children report they can be stretched much further to develop reading fluency and better their skills to interrogate texts at all levels.

Writing:

- Children at all stages write across a range of genres and for a variety of purposes including real life purposes. Children work through the process of writing including using planning, drafting and editing to produce a final piece. They need more opportunities to apply their writing skills in meaningful contexts across all areas of their learning. They would benefit from clear smart targets showing the skills to be demonstrated at the level. Children should use their reading material more regularly as a model for writing exemplification. Writing needs to be tracked much more systematically across the school. There are a few examples of strong practice and staff should work as a team to ensure consistently high standards. Staff should continue to consider the pace of learning and level of challenge for those very able children who are progressing confidently through their targets. Staff should be more rigorous in demanding higher standards of writing presentation at all times.

Numeracy and mathematics :

- Overall, attainment in maths and numeracy is weak. Data provided by the school indicates that at early level, children are making appropriate progress in maths and numeracy. This is not sustained across the school, where less than half of the children are making appropriate progress across all areas of maths and numeracy at first and second level. The headteacher has indicated that this data is not reliable due to the lack of staff confidence in relation to professional judgements.
- Planned experiences in maths and numeracy need to be more focused around real-life and relevant contexts to increase children's engagement and motivation, leading to higher attainment. Opportunities for planning maths and numeracy across the curriculum need to be developed across all stages. Only a few children were able to discuss what relevance their learning would have for them in real life situations.

- The main focus for planning in maths and numeracy across all classes is on number related activities. Regular opportunities for pupils to engage in learning across all other areas of maths and numeracy need to be much more evident. Staff need to ensure that all areas of maths and numeracy are being planned for and pupils have the opportunity to develop their learning progressively.
- **Number:** Across all stages in the school, children are developing their understanding of number and number processes. By the end of early level, children are able to count with increasing confidence and are exploring strategies like 'counting on' to add numbers to 10. By the end of first level, children are able to solve simple number calculations mentally and can use taught strategies to determine multiplication and division facts. By the end of second level, children are able to use their knowledge of number and number processes to calculate answers. There are too few opportunities for children to apply their knowledge or identify their own strategy for solving problems in a range of contexts. Across all levels, children are not confident when explaining strategies they would use in problem solving.
- **Money:** In Primary 7, children have had the opportunity to explore how they can plan a meal within a budget and have explored purchasing items which are discounted to develop their understanding of percentages. However, planned experiences across all stages are too focused on the completion of resource based learning and children are not making the connection between their class work in maths and numeracy and how this can be used in real life contexts.
- Across first and second level, almost all children do not yet have a strong enough understanding of most concepts in shape, position and movement, measurement, angle, symmetry and transformation and information handling. Staff should consider their approaches to planning to ensure children are experiencing the opportunity to engage in a range of learning opportunities across all areas of maths and numeracy and that these are revisited regularly.
- **Information handling:** At first and second level, pupils were not confident in identifying and discussing the different ways in which data can be presented and what their experiences of this have been. The school should plan for children to have regular opportunities to collect, organise and display data in a variety of ways, including through the use of digital technologies.
- **Problem solving:** Children do not have enough experience of problem-solving using a range of strategies. Developing more open-ended and challenging learning experiences in numeracy and mathematics across all stages would allow children to apply their knowledge and skills in new and different contexts. It would also allow the children to consolidate and apply their learning.

Attainment over time:

- Staff have begun to develop more robust approaches to tracking attainment over time. There was insufficient evidence of children' progress prior to the appointment of the new headteacher.

Overall quality of learners' achievement:

- Children demonstrated skills in creating, presenting and sharing their learning in classes. They could work effectively as team members and listen to the views of others well. Children are proud to see their achievements and those of others

displayed in classes and around the school. Dojo children's stories allow school work to be shared with parents but this is not yet sufficiently rigorous in identifying skills progression.

- Children are developing their leadership and social skills, for example as lunch time monitors, playground helpers, buddies and as members of school committees organising events and fundraising. Older children respond well to responsibilities they are given and enjoy supporting younger children very much. Children describe and demonstrate improvements in their self-esteem, confidence and attitude as a result of for example participating in the recent school performances such as the Christmas show. They described well how they consult with peers on ideas for the pupil council or presenting at house assemblies. A few children have reached the standard to demonstrate their skills in sport at a very high level. To maximise the value and further developments of these achievements their purpose should be defined more clearly and be linked to other opportunities across the curriculum where similar skills are being developed. The school capitalised commendably on its unique local environment by undertaking a beach clean-up, resulting in children in P4/5 receiving accreditation in the form of a John Muir Award. Further opportunities for accredited achievement should be considered.
- The headteacher has correctly identified the importance of establishing a whole staff understanding about the value of recognising, recording and tracking children's achievements gained in school and beyond. This would support the school in demonstrating the contribution of children's achievements to the development of skills and attributes, and allow analysis of data to identify where further opportunities are required.
- We agreed with the school that a next step would be to increase children's awareness of the skills for learning, life and work that all such achievement opportunities afford them. Teachers and children now need to focus on the skills and attributes developed as a result of achievements to raise expectations of what can be achieved individually and in collaboration with others.

Equity for all learners:

- The school is beginning to consider the place of equity for all learners including monitoring the progress of disadvantaged children. Staff are aware of the range of challenges faced by families in the community. Staff should consider whether they can support learner improvement through the increase of mentoring systems including through partnerships with pupils at the nearby Academy. Staff need to build on their work with parents to up skill them further on Curriculum for Excellence to be able to support their own children better at home. In discussion with the inspection team, the headteacher was able to describe the progress and achievement made by a number of individual children. Support for children should be reviewed, including improving equity by, for example, making more effective use of digital tools to support learning.

SCHOOL CHOICE OF QI 2.2 CURRICULUM

- **Theme 1:** *Rationale and design*
 - **Theme 2:** *Development of the Curriculum*
 - **Theme 3:** *Learning pathways*
 - **Theme 4:** *Skills for learning, life and work*
-
- Following a review of the vision and values of the school, a revised curriculum rationale was developed to identify the aims of the curriculum at Boddam Primary School. This has taken account of some national guidance but does yet not reflect the context of the school. As this has been a very recent development, it is not reflected in the current curriculum being delivered across the school. The headteacher recognises that this is a starting point but that work needs to continue to ensure all staff develop a shared understanding of curriculum design and structure to ensure consistency and progression across all stages.
 - Staff are not yet planning across the contexts for learning or taking account of cross cutting themes such as enterprise within their planning. This should be addressed in order to allow children to use their skills in a range of contexts and to develop a better understanding of the relevance of learning within and outwith the classroom.
 - The school recognises the need to review and refresh the curriculum. This should include planned professional learning in order to ensure a shared understanding by all staff. Staff do not yet have a clear understanding of how to plan using the experiences and outcomes across all areas of the curriculum or how these can be linked to deliver effective interdisciplinary learning. The school should identify the key priorities that require addressed initially and focus on how these can be embedded across the school. Learners experiences should begin to reflect a more appropriate and meaningful curriculum across all stages.
 - The headteacher has recognised the need to develop learning pathways within all areas of the curriculum in order to ensure high expectations for all learners and to raise attainment. Current planning does not build on prior learning nor yet ensure breadth and depth of learning in curricular areas. The school should review their approaches to planning across all areas of the curriculum. The development of learning pathways will support staff confidence in planning for progression within and across levels. This includes the need to ensure appropriate learning in DYW / Enterprise and learning outdoors.
 - The school would benefit from continuing to develop an 'inwards, outwards, forwards' approach in order to identify good practice to support their own school improvement.

PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- Friendly, well-mannered children who are proud of their school and eager to learn. They enjoy working and playing with their classmates.
- The strong collegiate environment led by the headteacher and the positive relationships between staff and children to support an improving climate for learning.
- The developing partnerships with parents who are keen to support change and contribute to school improvement.

AGREED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL

- Improve the consistency of children's experiences and outcomes in the classroom. To do this staff need to increase the pace of learning and provide more challenging and relevant activities better matched to children's needs and abilities. In addition staff should put in place effective assessment arrangements to support learning. These need to focus on clear smart targets and include regular evaluation of latest and best progress.
- The school should continue with its plans to develop staff's shared understanding of progression in order to assure accurate monitoring and tracking of progress. Staff need to have more opportunities within and beyond the cluster to moderate achievement at all levels.
- The school should continue with its work to develop well considered wellbeing programmes that are relevant to the needs of young people. This should include approaches to track and monitor progress in this area to continue to improve the wellbeing outcomes for all learners.
- Improve attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?

We will liaise with Aberdeenshire Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 15 months of publication of this letter. We will discuss with Aberdeenshire Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Summarised Inspection Findings

Boddam Primary School (Early Learning and Childcare – nursery class attached to a primary school)

Aberdeenshire Council

SEED No: 5215625

18 April 2017

Section two

Summarised Inspection Findings

Boddam Primary School (Early Learning and Childcare)

1.3 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community*
 - *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
 - *Implementing improvement and change*
- Practitioners are committed to achieving the best outcomes for children and are effective in creating a caring and welcoming learning climate. They now need to be more fully involved in shaping the vision, values and aims and more active in contributing to shaping future improvements in the nursery class.
 - Practitioners feel supported by the school leadership in striving to make improvements in the nursery class. The school improvement plan includes some key priorities for the nursery. The current plan has had some impact on the range and quality of children's outdoor learning experiences and on children's ability to access outdoor learning in a more free flow manner. Existing arrangements for monitoring and tracking mean that it is not yet clear how far changes are leading to improvements in children's literacy or numeracy skills. Practitioners will need support of the school management to develop a monitoring calendar to ensure that planned improvement is linked clearly to effective self-evaluation.
 - Staff are reflective practitioners and strive continuously to make improvement to the nursery class. They seek opportunities to develop their practice through continuing professional learning and the support of the local authority Principal ELC teacher. The school needs now to ensure that all practitioners are encouraged to apply professional learning in taking forward key aspects of the life and work of the nursery class. The lead practitioner will need leadership training to support her in taking forward change in the nursery class. All practitioners need to recognise their responsibility to make more effective use of current thinking and research about quality in early learning and childcare available in national guidance and examples of highly effective practice.
 - Self-evaluation of the nursery class involves practitioners and to some extent parents. Practitioners are at an early stage in using national frameworks and guidance to evaluate their practice. They will require support from school leadership to develop further their skills in using a range of tools to evaluate the quality of early learning and childcare. Children need to be consulted and involved more in the improvement process, reflecting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the image of the child as detailed in the national practice guidance. In partnership with practitioners, the leadership team now needs to guide the strategic direction of the nursery class to improve curriculum, early pedagogy and assessment.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
 - *Quality of interactions*
 - *Effective use of assessment*
 - *Planning, tracking and monitoring*
- Relationships between children and practitioners are warm and caring. Interactions with children are consistently positive and supportive. Practitioners use praise and comments appropriately to encourage children to persevere and do their best. This is helping children to recognise their achievements and to develop confidence and a sense of themselves as successful learners. Practitioners should now take forward plans to further develop their use of national practice guidance and illustrations of highly effective practice to enhance learning environments and experiences for younger children and for children who have extended sessions.
 - Children are engaged and motivated by the range of experiences offered indoors and out. Engagement is most evident when children are able to exercise choice and take their learning in directions of their own choosing. They need to have more opportunities to do this. Practitioners should monitor experiences on offer to ensure that the learning environment affords scope for children to develop creativity, curiosity and inquiry and independence through different types of high quality play.
 - Practitioners take time to listen to children. They are sensitive and responsive when interacting with younger children. As a result children feel safe and know that their ideas and suggestions are welcomed and taken into account. This is making them more confident and ready to share their thoughts and feelings. Practitioners now need to work together to use observation and professional dialogue more effectively to improve the quality of interactions and to extend children's communication, thinking and creativity skills. They should develop further their use of comment and thoughtful questioning to promote more sustained shared thinking during child initiated and planned learning.
 - Children are consulted in planning their learning. Their interests and questions are used as a starting point for planning learning each week. Plans are shared with parents through the nursery planning wall and big books. Practitioners need to further develop approaches to consultation to involve children more in talking about, planning and evaluating their own learning. This will enable children to follow their interests and deepen their individual learning.
 - Practitioners know children as individuals and as learners. They have taken steps recently to begin to improve their use of observations in making assessments of the progress of young children and toddlers. They need to continue this work to ensure that approaches to capturing and recording information about children's learning and development provides reliable evidence and leads to improved outcomes for children. They need to make sure arrangements support them well in evaluating

learning, connecting experiences to prior learning and planning next steps for learners. Practitioners should evaluate the extent that existing learning profiles are effective in supporting children to reflect on their learning, inform parents of progress, and enable children and parents to make useful contributions to documenting learning and achievements.

- Practitioners discuss the progress children are making in their learning. Children's progress now needs to be tracked and monitored formally. Practitioners should use their knowledge of what children have learned to build on prior learning and provide more challenging opportunities for children to apply and deepen their understanding.
- There is scope for practitioners across the early level to work together to ensure a shared understanding of early learning pedagogy and assessment that supports effective transitions. In particular the importance of play in early learning should be understood and realised more fully across the level. Practitioners need to work together to ensure that the image of the young child that informs their practice is shared across the early level and throughout the school.

2.2 CURRICULUM: theme 2: Learning and Development Pathways

- **See the school's QI of choice below which is 2.2 Curriculum.**

2.7 PARTNERSHIPS: theme 3 Impact on children and families – Parental Engagement

- The nursery class welcomes parents and encourages them to become involved in children's learning. Planning for learning is shared with parents using a nursery class notice board, newsletters and daily communication and parent meetings twice a year. Individual and class learning episodes are shared with parents on-line with comments and observations from practitioners and children. Parent comments are valued and sometimes used to inform future planning.
- Further links between nursery and home are provided by 'Travelling Ted', stay and play sessions and a lending library. It will be important in planning further partnership working to evaluate the intended impact from the outset to secure maximum benefit.

2.1: SAFEGUARDING

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority

3.1 ENSURING WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
 - *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
 - *Inclusion and equality*
- Practitioners in the nursery class are aware of the importance of relationships to wellbeing and early learning. The nursery class provides a secure and nurturing place for children to learn and develop in the care of responsive and thoughtful practitioners. As a result most children are developing awareness of the feelings of others and show caring responses to their peers and friends. Good friendships support children in their learning. Practitioners are developing a shared approach to promoting positive behaviour and set appropriate expectations for all children. When needed they assist children to help them resolve any disagreements that might arise.
 - Practitioners are developing their understanding of the wellbeing indicators and use them when discussing their care of individual children. They now need to make more focused use of the indicators in improving their practice. This includes helping children to develop an awareness of what it means to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included and what children can do to enhance their own wellbeing.
 - Leaders in the school should consider how they can support children in the nursery class to develop more awareness of own rights and those of children around the world, through the promotion of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
 - The views and opinions of children are valued in the nursery class. Children's interests are used as a basis for planning learning. This needs to be developed further to ensure that children have a stronger voice in shaping the work and life of the nursery class and of their wider school community.
 - Practitioners are aware of and understand their responsibilities in relation to the statutory duties and codes of practice. Where required, they work with parents and partners in fulfilling statutory duties to improve outcomes for children. Monitoring should be improved to ensure that all practitioners are aware of the support needs of children and are confident that they understand their role in supporting children to improve outcomes. Existing approaches to recording progress in learning and development should be reviewed to ensure that it enables practitioners to collect the information they need to evaluate the progress of all children, particularly for children who need additional support with their learning. This needs to be agreed and applied in a consistent manner.

3.2 SECURING CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- *Progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing*
 - *Children's progress over time*
 - *Overall quality of children's achievement*
 - *Ensuring equity for all children*
- There is a positive focus on health and wellbeing in the nursery class. Practitioners encourage children to talk about their feeling and concerns. Most children have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and can talk about why they need to wash their hands and brush their teeth. They have been learning about healthy food choices through helping to prepare nutritious soups and through visits from dental health staff. Outdoor learning experiences encourage children to be active and to challenge themselves in physical activities such as balancing on a beam or cooperating to transport heavy objects.
 - Toddlers are developing their communication skills in one to one conversations with attentive adults who make time to talk and listen. More frequent use of songs and rhymes will further support learners to develop enjoyment and early communication skills. Older children are developing their communication skills well. Most children talk to express thoughts and ideas in play and in groups with increasing confidence. They are developing their enjoyment of stories and non-fiction texts and on their trip to the library demonstrated their confidence and pleasure in sharing books together. Practitioners help children to explore favourite stories through the use of puppets, props and frequent retellings. Children are becoming aware of patterns in spoken language and a few play very confidently and creatively with sounds. Most children recognise their name, for example when registering using the interactive white board. A majority of children can also recognise the names of their friends using initial letters and letter patterns as cues. A few children are beginning to explore written language more. Practitioners need to consider how they can support all children to extend and apply their developing communication skills more in everyday activities, real life experiences and play.
 - Children are developing their understanding of mathematical concepts through their play and exploration of materials. They count in the course of their shared activities and games, occasionally finding reasons to count backwards. A few children are starting to explore data handling in their engagement with online positive behaviour information presented as a pie chart on the smart board. They are beginning to use the language of comparison when talking about the distribution of reward points. There is evidence of children applying their knowledge and understanding in discussing problems and considering possible solutions, for example in discussion over how many block they needed to reach up to a desired height.

- The further improvement of literacy and mathematics curriculum needs to be a priority for improvement planning. Practitioners now need to use planning and assessment in a more focused way to support literacy and numeracy skills for individuals; planning opportunities for skill development across learning, using planning to ensure that children experience breath, application and challenge in their learning.
- Children are confident and enjoy success in their learning. Most children are able to self-regulate their emotions and are beginning to be more confident when talking about their feelings. Children show care for each other, this is especially the case with older children caring for and mentoring younger peers. Children are able to take on some roles of responsibility in the nursery class, for example acting as snack helpers. They are not always able to explain what their role involves or requires of them. Practitioners need to look at how they can provide many more opportunities for children to exercise roles of responsibility, making informed decisions and taking action to improve their nursery class and wider community.

SCHOOL CHOICE OF QI: 2.2 CURRICULUM

- **Rationale and design**
- **Learning and development pathways**
- **Pedagogy and play**
- **Skills for life and learning**

- The curriculum framework is firmly based on play and active learning. Relationships and children's wellbeing is at the heart of learning and teaching in the nursery class. When planning for younger children, practitioners take account of Building the Ambition and national guidance, Pre-birth to Three. When planning for older children practitioners use the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence to provide a wide range learning experiences across the breadth of the curriculum. They now need to develop a clear rationale for the curriculum based on a deeper, shared understanding of the essential aspects of early learning: wellbeing, communication, curiosity, creativity and inquiry. This should also reflect the unique context of Boddam nursery class.
- Enhancing opportunities to learn outdoors is recognised as a priority for continuing improvement. Visitors to the nursery class enrich children's learning experiences. Children also benefit from visits to places of interest in the community including local businesses. The nursery class has strong links with the nearby local library. This is having a very positive impact on children's literacy skills and their enjoyment of stories and other texts. Practitioners have noted the impact on children's questioning resulting from a recent visit to a local garage. They now need to make more use of locally available amenities and the distinctive local environment to enrich the curriculum and stimulate children's interest in work and life their community, its history, culture and traditions.
- Children are becoming aware of digital technology through their use of the interactive white board, tablet computers and programmable toys. Almost all children respond well to challenge and are motivated and enjoy solving problems on their own and with others. In planning for groups and individuals, practitioners now need to make more considered use of observations and principles of personalisation, challenge and depth to enable children to take forward their own ideas and interests in their own way and in their own time.
- Practitioners across the early level need to work together to ensure that shared understandings of early learning pedagogy and assessment support effective transitions. This will contribute to ensuring continuity and progression through to the next stage of learning. Practitioners need to work with P1 staff to ensure that the image of the child that informs their practice is shared across early learning in the school.

PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- Friendly, well-mannered children who are proud of their school and eager to learn. They enjoy working and playing with their classmates.
- The strong collegiate environment led by the headteacher and the positive relationships between staff and children to support an improving climate for learning.
- The developing partnerships with parents who are keen to support change and contribute to school improvement.

AGREED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL

- Improve the consistency of children's experiences and outcomes in classrooms, playrooms and outdoors. To do this staff need to increase the pace of learning and provide more challenging and relevant activities better matched to children's needs and abilities. In addition staff should put in place effective assessment arrangements to support learning. These need to focus on clear smart targets and include regular evaluation of latest and best progress.
- The school should continue with its plans to develop staff's shared understanding of progression in order to assure accurate monitoring and tracking of progress. Staff need to have more opportunities within and beyond the cluster to moderate achievement at all levels.
- The school should continue with its work to develop well considered wellbeing programmes that are relevant to the needs of young people. This should include approaches to track and monitor progress in this area to continue to improve the wellbeing outcomes for all learners.
- Improve attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?

We will liaise with Aberdeenshire Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 15 months of publication of this letter. We will discuss with Aberdeenshire Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.